

April 1993

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Point



three

The magazine of **TOC H**

**Toc H in Europe
Mill Hill**

**Toc H Music Club
CAMEO**

**Victims Meet Offenders
Forty Years a Staff Member
First Impressions
of Bangladesh**

**Targets for Toc H
Friends of Khasdobir
Warden Manor
Challenge Awards**

Point three



The Magazine of Toc H

Toc H is a movement of people who seek to build friendships, and offer service, across the barriers that usually divide us from one another. The basic unit is a group - at best a good cross-section of the local neighbourhood - which meets together regularly, and seeks to serve the community around it. Toc H was founded in 1915 by the Revd P B 'Tubby' Clayton, and since then has been providing opportunities for people to test the Christian way by practical experiment.

All members pledge themselves to try:

1. To welcome all in friendship and lessen by habit of thought, word and deed the prejudices which separate people.
2. To give personal service.
3. To find their own convictions while listening with respect to the views of others.
4. To acknowledge the spiritual nature of man and to test the Christian way by trying it.

This magazine is a forum for ideas about Toc H and about the world, as well as a record of Toc H service. Its title derives from the third of these Four Points.

Letters, articles and news items are welcomed and should be addressed to The Editor, *Point three*, at the address below.

Opinions expressed (including the editorial) are those of the individual contributors and not necessarily those of the Toc H movement.

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A Step In Faith

*....And dearer yet the brotherhood
That binds the brave of all the earth.*

Toc H is going through an interesting period in its long history. From the beginning it was ahead of its time - breaking down barriers of class and creed, encouraging people to meet in fellowship and friendship from across wide social divisions. This was also reflected in the Movement's early commitment to ecumenism at a time when the Church of England was rigid and hierarchical. Now we are pledged to strive to renew ourselves, having adopted a Strategic Plan that has been described as 'a step in faith'.

The plan has had a varied reception since it was passed by Central Council last November. It has met with all the misgivings and criticism that inevitably face something new. It seems to be a fact of human nature that we greet anything that is going to force us out of inertia with grave suspicion. And yet, if the dreaded plan is successful, will we not all praise and enthuse about it as if we had never had misgivings in the first place?

One thing that singles out pioneers from other people is their courage and vision. And their bravery. I haven't heard anyone say that this is a brave plan. Yet what else can it be? It has involved courage and a great deal of time and effort on the part of members of staff and of the CEC in their spare time. That needs to be recognised and also that we now need to *energise* the Movement into supporting the plan. It is pointless sitting back and criticising the inevitable. We need to produce some of the courage that is our legacy in this Movement.

We have the habit of talking about Toc H as if it were a 'has-been'. But we could certainly be a frontier movement again if we attempt to tackle some of the appalling injustices and wickedness of modern life. Having been offered the chance of a blood transfusion, we must step forward with courage to meet the challenge.

Toc H should be stirring its members to tackle some of the terrible issues facing people in this country, offering support where it is desperately needed. Being brave can be the most exhilarating of experiences.

Ruth Boyd
Editor

Toc H in Europe

Munster Group Work with Refugees

Munster is a beautiful city, clean and well planned, with a magnificent cathedral. There is a lake running from the city centre on which a pleasure boat ferries passengers the five kilometres through tree-lined parks to the all-weather zoo, weaving as it does between the sailing craft and windsurfers. A city of 270,000 people, 50,000 students and streets lined not with gold, but with Mercedes, BMWs and pushbikes.

Few people realise that within half a mile of the city centre is a small, wire-fenced compound covering about the same area as half a football pitch. Within this perimeter are several rows of containers, each with a door in one end and a window in the other and a refugee family living inside. There are 250 people in this one camp, from a total of somewhere in the region of 2000 in the Munster area, many living in similar conditions.



When I approached the headmaster of Edinburgh Senior School in Munster he agreed to ask the pupils if any of them would be interested in planning, organising and manning a Christmas party for some of the refugee children from this camp. From a total of just over 400 pupils a staggering 114 put forward their names. Although out of necessity this was whittled down to a few from each year, every student was involved in some way. Food and drink were prepared, indoor games were organised and fundraising began.

On 15 December a luxury coach collected 27 refugee children aged between 5 and 11 - 18 Macedonians and 9 Ukrainians.

On arrival at the school the children were met by a group of students and taken to the youth wing superbly set up with food plates, Christmas crackers, balloons. It all lasted about two minutes. The children tore into everything. The excitement in their faces made the whole event worth while before the party had even begun. For two hours British students and refugee children played, ate, drank and created a mess to equal my son's bedroom! Everyone thoroughly enjoyed each other's company and the occasion, the highlight of which was the arrival of Father Christmas convincingly played by Fred Mason, who distributed presents to the most enthusiastic children I have ever seen. The simple truth is that the phrase, 'there is enough for everyone', is not one that they are used to and none of them wanted to miss out.

Finally when it was time to go the bus departed amidst cheering, waving and few dry eyes. But the seed has been sown and the Toc H Youth Group at Edinburgh School are busy fundraising and making arrangements to take the children to an adventure play-park, and are also planning to hold a sports day.



Thanks to the staff and pupils at Edinburgh School, the Toc H Munster group, Robin Williamson (Centre Manager, Munster), Fred Mason (Centre Manager, Paderborn) and John Bainbridge (Development Officer, Paderborn) for their help, financial and in kind. Without them this superb day would never have taken place.

Terry Brown

News In Brief

Postcard from Germany

Paul Godley has been away for a while at Wendover and everybody, except me, is getting in their last bit of leave before the stocktaking rush in March. Robin Williams has finally moved house and we wish him and Kay every happiness. David Woodall is packing furiously in preparation for his return to UK on retirement. Berlin will miss him. Terry Brown has started a second youth group in Munster and John's second group in Paderborn is coming along nicely.

Malcolm Lowe

The New Season at Talbot House

Martine Boone reports from Belgium that the new season has begun well at Talbot House. The office and lounge have been redecorated and two parties of Toc H visitors have already stayed in the house. The Visitors' Centre is ready in the former Slessorium, comprising an exhibition area with a constantly updated slide show. The Centre will be officially opened on 3 April by Madame Duclos, Vice



Martine Boone & Jacques Ryckebosch

President of the Talbot House Association and a Councillor at the Town Hall.

Mill Hill Toc H Music Club

Ruth Boyd

One chilly Sunday evening in February, a slightly built figure walked on the stage to face a packed audience at the North London Collegiate School. One knew instantly that here was a real 'pro' at work, who was very much at his ease. The witticisms and jokes flowed, the audience were eating out of his hand. This was Wilfred Ransom's night. He was immaculately attired in full evening dress, as were the other male members of the Mill Hill Toc H Music Club. I was proud to be witness to the sheer professionalism of the entire evening and to listen to some of the best chamber music imaginable - the Amadeus Quartet combining with the Endellion String Quartet to play the Brahms Sextet and the Schubert Quintet.



At the end of the evening I returned to my car with the enthusiastic response of the audience still ringing in my ears. Yet another triumph for one of the most famous music clubs in existence. Wilfred is modest about his role in booking the finest musicians in the world. He

sees himself as the catalyst in getting 'bottoms on seats' in numbers worthy of the talent. The fact that artists like Alfred Brendel have become personal friends must give him pleasure, but he is very modest about his successes. For example, the extraordinary feat in January of persuading the Hungarian pianist, Andras Schiff, to play at Watford Town Hall, thus helping to save it for future concerts. Schiff stood up at the end of the performance and announced: 'Perfect... please may I book a return date?'. The council in charge of the huge hall in Watford were planning to close it down because of the high cost of running it. When such an important concert pianist requested a booking for the next year, a stay of execution for the

Watford Assembly Rooms had to be granted. The Toc H Music Club normally meets at the Hertsmere Centre, now known as The Venue, in Boreham Wood, Herts, and it was a bold move to set a chamber music programme in a large setting like the cavernous Watford Town Hall. You could have heard a pin drop and the acoustics were marvellous.

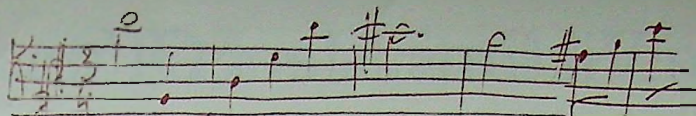
Such is the vision of 82 year-old Wilfred. When the editor visited him at his Mill Hill home, she found an extraordinarily lively and enthusiastic presence. A lot of noise ensued from their meeting! Wilfred is retiring from the Music Club next April and Alfred Brendel hopes to attend his farewell performance.

Ruth: You started the Music Club by yourself?

Wilfred: Yes, 40 years ago when I worked at Barclays Bank in Swiss Cottage. There were a lot of refugees from eastern Europe and one of our clients, a Polish pianist, had a very big overdraft. He was a very good musician and I invited him to give a recital. The idea was to wipe off his overdraft instead of paying him a fee and this was the start of the Music Club. It was a huge success. We took him along to a small church hall in Mill Hill and 300 people turned out on a cold, snowy February evening to hear him play.

We had a few hiccups. We made the mistake of mixing amateur and professionals at one time and had to stop doing that. I remember one occasion when Eileen Joyce - a famous lady who used to change her dress at least twice during concertos - did something marvellous to break the ice. She had a very good reputation and the audience was in awe of her. She started the first sonata and then got up and said, 'Oh, I've forgotten my notes'. She walked off the stage and the whole atmosphere at once changed when she came back. It was a very good example in self-advertising!

One of our first artists when we started to get bigger was Vladimir Ashkenazy, who had just defected from Russia. This was in 1963 and someone phoned and said that he would like to give a private concert. It was one of his first appearances in England and was a great success. From then on we could do no wrong. We have had some marvellous artists - Sir Geraint Evans, Tereza Berganza, Arthur Rubinstein (he came four times), Jacqueline du Pre, Sir Adrian Boult and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, John Ogden - we even had a jazz evening with Humphrey Lyttleton



and his Band, which was a terrific success.

Alfred Brendel has been coming to us for 20 years and I shall be handing the torch on in 1994 at the tender age of 83½ because I have been doing it for 40 years now. Even for a music club like ours, he will come along on the morning of the concert and rehearse each work for three hours, and then he and the piano tuner will put the keyboard on the stage and go over every note. He is such a perfectionist. He is a very erudite man and it has been a great pleasure and an honour to have met him.

R: Do you have some people who have been coming for 40 years?

W: Yes, that's the one thing that is detrimental to the club. We are rather ageing, we can't get young people to join us and sooner or later we shall go the way of all flesh. It can't be helped, but we are the best music club in Great Britain. When I went into a music shop in America, they had heard of us.

We've given a tremendous lot of money to Toc H through the concerts. We've got a bit of money put by so we won't go broke, and I for one don't worry about the money. As long as the artist turns up and the piano is ordered on the same day as the artist and the hall is booked on the same day as the piano and artist, then the audience come along. We sell an awful lot of season tickets with many people coming to all our concerts each season. In our heyday we had over 500 members and we now have 280. We rely on 200 casuals each time, who buy a ticket for the concerts they like. You throw your bread on the water and trust to luck that all will be well on the night, and thank heavens, it has all been well on the night.

R: Your speciality is chamber music?

W: Yes, it is. Our atmosphere goes

with chamber music. A nice, happy, intimate atmosphere. That is what we have built up and manage to maintain.

R: What of your own knowledge of music?

W: I don't read a word myself. For me the achievement is in creating the setting, the atmosphere, in which great artists can perform.

R: Which artists in the last 40 years have made your heart soar?

W: Number one has to be Andras Schiff - the concert in Watford was utter perfection. Then our beloved Rubinstein. Yehudi Menuhin, a

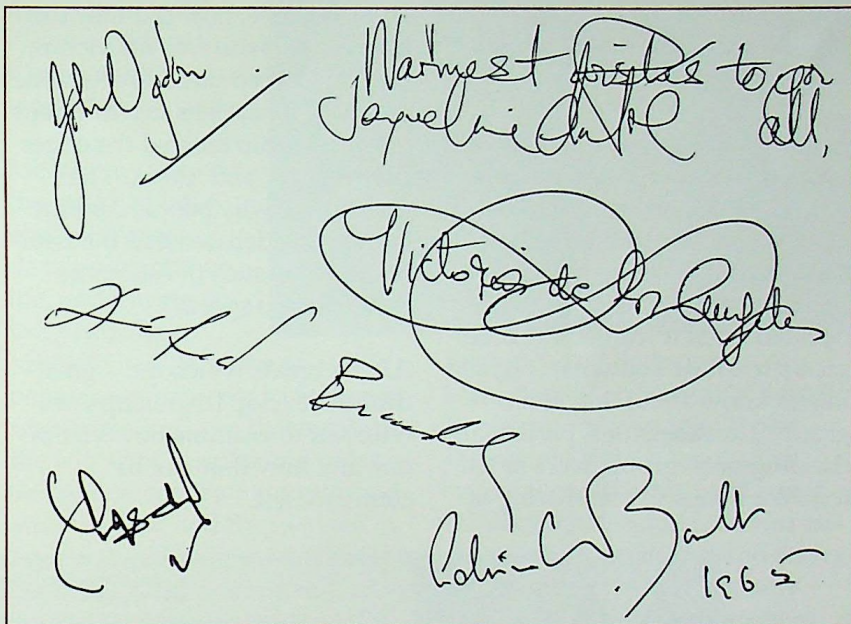
having them all around you.

Doing something creative and getting your friends to join in is worth all the tea in China.

Attracting a lady to come on her own from South Wales to hear Schiff play.... People come from Manchester, from Switzerland, break off their holidays to come to our concerts.... Of course I am an enthusiast.

R: Who within the movement of Toc H has influenced you most?

W: One of the greatest impacts in Toc H is that beloved man Peter East. I have huge reverence for



perfect gentleman - he thinks so highly of us. Alfred Brendel of course. John Ogden was a great friend of ours, and when I was in Edgware Hospital with a heart attack 30 years ago, John Ogden, Peter Katin and Denis Matthews came along every now and then to give a free recital to the nurses.

R: It sounds as if you run the club very much on your own?

W: You've got to go it alone in as much as you mustn't have too many committees. You have got to gauge what your audience likes to hear. In a way you have got to be a dictator, but a nice gentle sort of dictator. I don't believe in committee meetings! Toc H to me means working with people,

him and his enthusiasm and work in Bangladesh. I would like to end my days thinking that the Music Club has made an impact of that magnitude. I like to think that I have done something like that.

R: What would be your advice to the membership?

W: I would like to say to any person in Toc H or any club that if they get an idea, then see it through, don't be discouraged. Do your own thing; don't think too much of the expense and the criticism. Just go it alone if necessary. Don't get saddled with too many committees and you'll get the end result. Committees are the kiss of death to creativity.

CAMEO - Victims Meet Offenders.

19-21 February 1993

This weekend CAMEO was held at the Colsterdale Centre with 11 participants. It started with an icebreaker, then an exercise to establish that most of us were offenders in one way or another and had also been victims of crime. Suddenly we were not so sure which category we belonged to, which produced a lot of uncomfortable feelings. We then set the ground rules for the rest of the weekend.

There was generally a great deal of unease and all the participants had some fear of how others would respond to them.

On the Saturday we discussed our feelings as either a victim or an offender and then split into two groups - victims and offenders - each person deciding for himself where he or she went. Each group decided what it wanted the other group to know and what it would like to know about the other group. These sessions, particularly the offenders' group, were noted for their honesty. The sharing of

the information between the groups was difficult, but people remained honest to themselves and their convictions and did not avoid the issues or hide behind trite phrases, which was appreciated by all. The atmosphere relaxed as people realised they could be honest with everyone.

We then discussed particular crimes committed by various offenders and asked how they felt before the crime, were they aware it was a crime, how did they feel afterwards, who was the victim, etc. This forced us all to see crime and how it happens in a different way and again blurred the edges between 'us' and 'them'. The question of why people commit crimes was debated and the issue widened by such questions as 'Why do you speed?'

After a break, which did a great deal to develop friendships, we returned to examine how victims fare and how they can be compensated.

We spent time looking at how the media present offenders and victims, which gave a lot of food for thought and which was related to how we see ourselves. This Saturday evening session was the most relaxed and subdued of the weekend.

On Sunday morning we divided into mixed groups to discuss new rules for a new society. This was particularly relevant as one participant had blamed society throughout the weekend for all offences rather than accepting any blame himself. We looked at how we would deal with law breakers and how we could care for the victims.

We ended with the whole group participating in reflections. The friendships established and enriched during the weekend bore no resemblance to the initial fears and anxieties of Friday evening, which proved to me the power of people facing each other in a CAMEO.

Norah Anderson



Toc H believes that most human conflicts, large and small, are caused by misunderstanding, ignorance and prejudice. A Toc H Cameo is a way of reducing a little of that prejudice.

On a Toc H Cameo, you'll meet different people, in different places, and you'll talk about the differences. An intense experience, they are lively, challenging and creative.



In some Cameos a group of people will go and stay in a place which has a special history or meaning, such as World War 1 battlefields in Flanders, or Berlin, and they spend time learning about the history, and in thinking and reflecting on what they have learned.

Cameos help people to understand a bit more about each other, and about themselves. They are a way in which members of Toc H can broaden their experience, and a way in which new people can experience Toc H for the first time.



Cameo - Come And Meet Each Other - they last from a few hours to a week or more. In some of them Toc H brings together people from different groups, such as old and young, Black and White, police and offenders. We talk together about our different viewpoints, and this can lead to new and unexpected friendships.



Forty Years a Staff Member

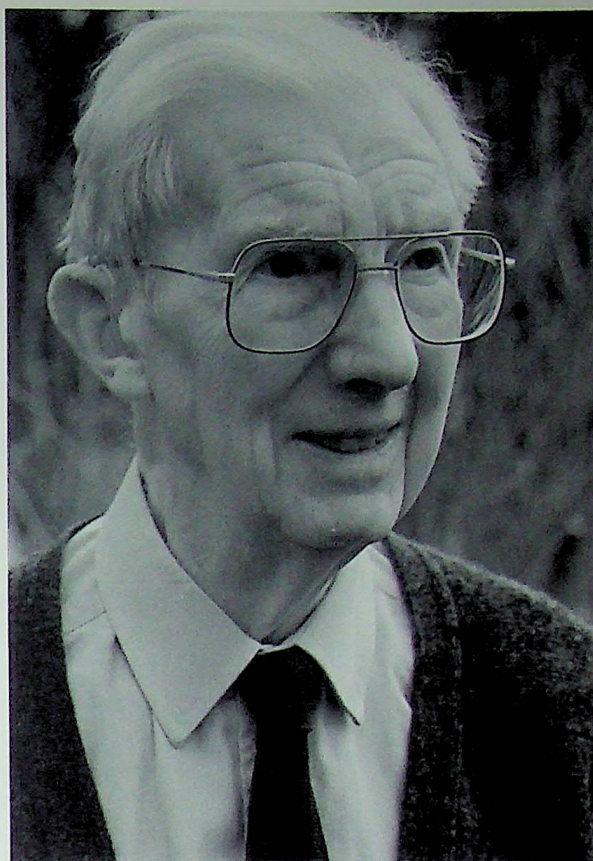
Colin Stephenson served on the staff of Toc H from December 1929 to 31 March 1968. He began the annual newsletter for former staff and edited it for 18 years until recently. He met Toc H in Leicester in 1925 where he had gone to work. He became a member and later went to live in the Mark and joined the staff to work with Hugh Sawbridge ('Sawbones'), the Toc H Area Padre. Colin spoke to Ruth Boyd during the week before he celebrated his 90th birthday:

When I joined Sawbones Toc H was already established in the main centres of population and was spreading rapidly. He explained to me that our job was to support and extend Toc H in the Area. It aimed at preserving and transmitting to future generations the spirit of the Old House by setting up branches as representative as possible of the local community, and by regular meetings, becoming a fellowship expressed in Fairmindedness and Service, and following the Christian way of life. Because of the growth of Toc H, a staff was needed to keep it on the right lines. It was Tubby's wish that the staff should work in pairs - a layman working with a padre - and sharing the job. Our job was to keep in touch with the existing branches and to inspire and encourage them in 'transmitting' what they had experienced for themselves in a branch. In those days the staff were usually involved in the new starts and worked with members from a local branch in seeking the mixture of men who would form the nucleus of a new branch. It was exciting bringing together men who did not normally meet, and convincing the clergy that they would not lose their best young men. It was not usual then for Church and Chapel to meet on common ground, and it still mattered where you went to school and who your father was. It was surprising how soon men fitted in to the Toc H atmosphere, once they knew about Talbot

House and 'Abandon Rank' and family prayers. It was all so simple and natural, and many men discovered that the Christian life worked every day.

Most of my time on the staff had been spent in Areas developing branch life, and during my last years the problem had been one of persuading branches to seek new members. Branches that survived the war were smaller and older. Some members had not returned after the war, and the men we expected - who would have met Services Clubs at home and abroad and would want to know more of Toc H - just did not appear. Services Clubs were not Talbot Houses. The combination of Tubby and Talbot House was a special magic which might not have happened if Tubby had not been sent to Flanders.

My belief in Toc H began in my early years in the Mark in Leicester, where I lived as a resident, went out every day to my job, and shared a room with others at night. We were a good mixed bunch, aged 16 to 35, from university, public school and council schools, working as banker, stockbroker or garage apprentice, but we all fitted in. It meant give and take, it meant



tolerance and that some of our ideas needed to be reconsidered. We learnt something of living together in right relationships where the traditions were based on Christian teachings. It was not the place for everyone, and many left after a few weeks, usually because they wanted a room of their own and did not enjoy so much company. During that time, I recall visits from, and being inspired by, men like Gilbert Williams, a staff Padre, and Bill Llewellyn, Governor of a Borstal Institution, who wanted our help when he planned to march about 30 of his boys from Surrey to Nottingham to build a new Borstal themselves. Then there was Herbert Legate, with whom I worked in Manchester. He was a Nonconformist Padre and made a great impression on me. He was very challenging, lively, witty, full of fun and energy and never allowed me to stop thinking. These men, and Toc H, have kept me going. **Colin Stephenson** ■

Karen Thomson



Karen joined Toc H in 1991 as a Development Officer at Newark Street, Whitechapel, in the East End of London, building a volunteer base in the Tower Hamlets area which is surrounded by problems and has a diverse cultural mix.

A substantial amount of her work is with Bengali people in the area and continuing the work started by Peter East and the Friends of Khasdobir. Karen has recently returned from three weeks with Peter East, experiencing first-hand the Schools Under The Sky Project in Sylhet which offers education at village level.

First impressions of Bangladesh

Landing at Dhaka Airport at 1.30 pm on Wednesday 20 January was no different from landing at any other international airport, until we got to the transfer desk. Then I discovered how untypical the British are compared with the rest of the world. I am sure we must be the only nation which has queues. Everyone jostled to be first, and as Europeans we stood out like the proverbial sore thumb until someone intervened, and we were given our tickets almost immediately. The flight to Sylhet took less than an hour, and we passed through passport control and customs with surprising ease, but I guess that is one of the advantages of travelling with a VIP (Peter East), at least in these parts. People were very friendly and curious as to why Europeans were travelling to their country. We were met at the airport by Harun Bhai (*bhai* = brother) and several of his relatives carrying garlands and bunches of flowers. As the plane was delayed, the many children they had brought were sent home before we arrived, much to my relief.

As we left the airport we were approached by a number of beggars - all women and children

who silently held out a submissive hand to beg for a taka. I felt very disturbed by the experience; living in London I meet many homeless people on the streets but they still have some spirit. What made me feel so uneasy about the people begging at the airport was their submissiveness - they lacked animation and gusto for life.

We went to Harun's house for food and to meet lots more people. The journey there by car gave me my first glimpse of this beautiful but frightening country. It is frightening because of the extreme poverty in which so many people live and there seems so little hope for that ever to improve much.

Dusk was rapidly approaching as we raced from the airport to Khasdobir. We passed many rickshaws all ringing their bicycle bells as they overtook each other. They drive on the left-hand side of the road - the same as in Britain - but beyond that I don't think anyone pays much heed to any sort of highway code. Just like London really!

We passed many stalls and huts on the way. These huts, made of cane and corrugated iron, are



where most families live. Lights were on and everywhere people were coming and going, shopping and selling. It was a relief to get to Harun's house. Children played all around and kept popping up by the window to say, 'Hallo bhai' to Peter.

After eating at Harun's, we were taken to our hotel. We had not been there an hour before Harun had sent his nephews to make sure we were comfortable. I retired to bed early and left Peter to greet old friends who were anxious to see him again.

I awoke at about five as someone was knocking on the door of a neighbour. A few minutes later the muezzin began. Across the village from different directions was the sound of the imams calling the men of the village to pray. This was a most welcome sound, as it reminded me of Israel and was familiar, although belonging to another culture.

As dawn approached there were more and more noises, cars, taxis and rickshaws all vying for space on the road, hooting and ringing their bells.

To be continued ■



Toc H - Friends of Khasdobir

With the uncertainty of future funding, it has been decided to hold an annual anniversary day to mark the time when Peter East, MBE, went to Bangladesh to begin this project. It is to be called: **The Toc H Khasbodir Friendship Day** and will be celebrated each year on the second Saturday in June, which this year will be 12 June 1993.

Every Toc H branch, member and supporter of the Friends of Khasdobir is invited to organise a fundraising event to help the ongoing work of the Khasdobir Youth Action Group.

Events can be as big or small as you can cope with! From garden fetes to rummage sales; from bring and buys to car boot sales; from concerts to dances; from raffles to coffee mornings; from afternoon tea parties to a small meal for a group of friends - anything is possible if you are willing.

Poster blanks and publicity booklets about the work of the Khasdobir Youth Action Group will be distributed in good time for your local publicity.

For more information please contact: John Biggerstaff, Toc H International Office, Headquarters, 1 Forest Close, Wendover, Aylesbury, Bucks HP22 6BT.

Targets for Toc H

Over the last few years the Central Executive Committee, supported by the full-time officers of Toc H, have spent a considerable amount of time addressing the problems faced by the Movement. This has led to the phased programme described by John Mitchell in *Point three*, January, starting with the 'Statement of Re-affirmation' and leading, via the 'Focus for the Future', to the 'Strategic Plan'.

While it is right that those entrusted with the care and management of the Movement should be aware of the problems we face and take the appropriate actions, there is a danger that we will see ONLY the problems and nothing else. We could end up seeing Toc H as a failing Movement which has too many problems to continue. So unlike the days when Tubby was alive, when children were polite, when summers were always warm and winter days cold and crisp.

Of course things are not as they were and they are certainly not as we remember them. It would be unrealistic, and indeed undesirable, to expect an organic movement like ours to remain unchanged for decades. It is a mistake, which is all too easy to make, to believe that a changed Toc H is necessarily a worse Toc H.

Toc H has adopted a practice with its staff which I think we would do well to apply to ourselves as a Movement. All members of staff now have targets set for their work in the forthcoming year. At the year end they then examine their progress towards fulfilling those targets. We should adopt a similar process for the Movement as a whole.

We would not have to set ourselves targets. That has already been done, and we agreed them when we joined Toc H. They are contained within the Main Resolution and expanded on in the Four Points of the Compass. All we need to do is to assess how far Toc H is progressing towards fulfilling those targets. We need to be honest with ourselves, and that means neither looking through rose-coloured glasses nor being jaundiced in our judgments.

It also means being disciplined in

those things which we use as indicators of success or failure. The Main Resolution exhorts us to 'reckon nothing of the world's opinion or its successes for ourselves or for this our family'. Do we honour this exhortation? In our constant concern about the size of the Movement and its finances, are we not judging the success or failure of Toc H by the world's criteria, rather than our own?

It is not one of the aims of Toc H, as set out in the Main Resolution and the Four Points of the Compass, to spend year by year less than we receive in income. Since it is not one of our objectives, we should not use this as a measure of how successful we are.

Nor was it ever set down that the membership of Toc H should be of a certain size. Indeed Tubby Clayton said that we should not use our energies

trying to get people into Toc H, but we should sweat blood to get Toc H into them. We like to think of Toc H as a family. Is a family with four children better than a family with two?

Those who founded Toc H were men of vision. They knew what was needed in the divided society of the 1920's, and it is still needed in the equally divided society of today.

The work of Toc H, the experience of Toc H, is as valid today as when it first started. We should look at the guidelines they laid down, the challenges which they set, the targets they left us and ask ourselves if we meet them.

The first of these challenges or targets is 'to love widely'.

So how do we measure up? Do we, as a movement, welcome all in friendship? Do we genuinely seek to lessen the prejudices that divide men? Perhaps, hardest of all, do we see the problems of others as our own?



These are the questions we need to ask if we are to measure our progress as a movement against this target. Some branches and projects do contain a real mixture of people, others continue to try to develop such a mixture. By bringing together different people and by mixing members of branches and friendship circles at different events we are, as a movement, trying to welcome all and trying to lessen prejudices.

The second challenge or target is to 'build bravely'.

Do we enable members to serve their fellows? Do we study local, national and international conditions and their effect on others?

This is what we are challenged to do, and just about every branch, friendship circle and project could give concrete examples of how this particular target is met. I will not give examples, for service is one aspect of the Toc H challenge which all would agree is fulfilled.

The third target is 'to think fairly'.

We are called upon to listen to the views of others, to find our own convictions, and to influence public opinion, so that conflict may be lessened.

I believe that this could raise the most contentious issues. It is tempting to say without thinking that we achieve this target. However, we need to ask ourselves whether we, as a movement, really listen to the views of others or whether we are preoccupied with talking amongst ourselves. Even then, in our debates, do we really listen or do we simply give others the opportunity to state their case and then carry on regardless? I think that Toc H is not currently a significant voice in public affairs. We do not influence public opinion. This is not to say that we cannot, merely that we do not. This is one aspect of the Four Points which is currently neglected.

The fourth of the targets we have been given is 'to witness humbly'.

Do we acknowledge the spiritual nature of man? Do we practise the Christian way of life? Do we help truth to prevail? Do we work for a better life through the example of friendship, service and fairmindedness? These are the things which the Fourth Point of the Compass calls on us to do.

Those who founded Toc H were men of vision. They knew what was needed in the divided society of the 1920's, and it is still needed in the equally divided society of today.

Although there are many different opinions as to what is meant by the phrase 'the Christian way of life', there can be few who would say that Toc H does not seek to follow that way. We incorporate so many things in our regular work within Toc H which acknowledge the spiritual nature of man in a very real sense, whether by way of prayer, or contemplation, or active discussion, that we can claim success in meeting this target. Many of our branch jobs are intended to work for a better life, as are the friendship circles, CAMEOS and projects.

If then we use this method of assessment to look at the state of Toc H, looking at our targets and examining how well we achieve them, we find that we are not in such bad shape as some would have us believe. Toc H is not the failing organisation which some people see.

We need to look at those things that drew us into Toc H and for which Toc H was created, and ask if they are still valid and how well we are living up to them. The demands which are made on us, those targets set by the founders of Toc H, do not encompass the values of the market place which regards size and finance as being paramount. Measured against those targets, Toc H could indeed be described as a failing Movement. However, measured by the targets set us by the founders of Toc H I think that there are areas of considerable success.

There will always be things which could be done better, but I believe that if those men who came together to start this Movement could see today's Toc H, the friendship circles, the work with prisoners, the variety of projects and all of the work and fellowship experiences in branches, they would be pleased with their creation.

The Strategic Plan will take us into the future. We must use the Plan to build on their creation, their vision. Toc H has everything to offer, everything to give. The Toc H experience can be a vital part of life's journey. The Strategic Plan can be a guide by which we can draw people into that experience.

I believe that what we need to do in the implementation of the Strategic Plan is to recognise our strengths as well as our weaknesses. Those who are charged with the responsibility of overseeing that implementation should not overlook the faults and failings of Toc H but should set them within the context of a Movement which has defined its own measures of success. It may be time that we started to look at what is right with the Movement as well as what is wrong with it.

Robin McSorley ■

BRANCH NEWS

Tunbridge Wells East Branch reports that over the past few months their sales of *Point three* have risen by 50%. Keep up the good work!

After many years of hard work, on 27 January **Scartho Toc H** celebrated its newly acquired branch status. Members had the essential support of Barrow, Barton and Scunthorpe branches. The former Scartho Branch had declined in the 1970s because of the age of the original members, who had built the pavilion in which the branch meets. The pavilion was rented out to the community. One of the main users was the Pat Yarborough Dancing School and, rather than see Toc H disappear, they decided to try and rescue it. They succeeded, and their bold efforts are being continued by the new branch in order to renovate the pavilion. At the celebration Connie Boot conducted the Ceremony of Light using a new lamp. However, the branch would be delighted to locate the original branch lamp. Any information would be appreciated. Please telephone Pauline Grant (branch secretary): 0472 822751



Toc H won the trophy for the best and most informative display at an Exhibition of Hobbies and Pastimes organised by the Rotoract Club and recently held in Accrington Town Hall. Great Harwood Branch organised and manned the stall, which displayed publicity material from Headquarters. Bert Hill from Stockport brought along the Toc H Mobile Display Unit and material provided by Bert formed the centrepiece. Seen here with the Trophy are: John Taylor, Brian Taylor, Anne Whitaker, Bert Hill, Canon Edward Wynne and Derek Shaw.

Stan Doorey, Secretary of **Nailsea Men's Branch**, writes: 'When Vic Bryant died in April 1992 his widow Esme asked that, in lieu of flowers, donations be made to Nailsea Men's Welfare Fund, which is disbursed only on charitable works within Nailsea. The response was truly magnificent. ...Nailsea is blessed with two Health Centres and these were chosen to receive equipment to be purchased in memory of Vic. On 7 December Esme, herself a member of Nailsea Women's Branch, presented one Health Centre with a rechargeable cautery. The second presentation at the other Health Centre was made by Vic and Esme's daughter, Mrs Carol Pickering, on 15 February and consisted of selected surgical instruments which will enable minor operations to be performed on the spot. Both Health Centres proudly display the Toc H Presentation Plaques which accompanied the gifts'.



COMPETITION

All families generate their own sayings and it is always interesting to run across them and to hear the often odd experiences which brought them into being. Selecting from my own family's collection, I give you the cry, 'Out next Wednesday!' In case you haven't guessed, this is the cry my parents sent up when, on the rare occasions they went househunting, they spotted a 'Des Res'. It is not recorded whether, or how often, the occupants decided to fall in with their request, but the cry always signalled to those in the know that George and Hilda had fallen for yet another dream-house.

Which brings me to the competition. It is to provide, as above, both the saying and the occasion(s) that prompted it. For the three entries judged to be the most revealing and /or amusing, modest prizes will be awarded and the entries will be published in *Point three*.

Bryan Podmore

Please sent entries (100-word limit each) to: Editorial Office, Toc H Headquarters, 1 Forest Close, Wendover, Bucks HP22 6BT. Judges: Bryan Podmore, Ruth Boyd. Closing date: 31 May 1993.



Rushden Pytchley Branch, moved by the plight of the Romanian orphans, came up with the idea of knitting blanket squares while discussing business on meeting nights when no guest speaker was booked. Here members display some of the squares that formed the completed blankets which were sent to Romania at Christmas.



Members and wives of Southend-on-Sea Men's Branch recently saw at first hand the vital equipment they had purchased for Southend Hospital Cardiac Care Unit, where branch chairman, Reg Sherrington, presented a cheque for £4000 for two heart monitors. Members took the opportunity to try out the new equipment and reassure themselves that, although they are now few in numbers, they are in a healthy state to continue the branch's 70 years of existence.

Warden Manor Challenge Awards

The following WARDEN MANOR 'CHALLENGE' AWARDS have been made during 1992/93:

£200 to **Inner City Safari**, a project offering outings and leisure activities to Bengali children living in the East End of London.

£145 to **Prostitution - Myths and Realities**, a CAMEO held in Middlesbrough and at Colsterdale.

£1000 towards the cost of the **Yeti Goes National** weekend project held in Birmingham in September 1992.

£500 to **Marrick - A Practical Perspective**, a project being held at Marrick Priory, North Yorkshire, 5-9 April 1993, which seeks to explore the spiritual relationship between life and work. An additional aim is to establish two new Toc H Action Groups (TAGs) from the volunteers who take part.

£1000 to South Dorset Toc H District towards a project being organised in conjunction with the Ocean Youth Club, 15-21 May 1993, when six volunteers will accompany six local children on a sailing trip in the English Channel, including a possible visit to Belgium.

£500 to the Bristol Cameo Group towards a CAMEO - **Great War Madness and Toc H Methods**, held at Talbot House, Poperinge, in November 1992.

£300 to Bramley Joint Branch towards an outing in 1993 for local elderly living alone, and hoped-for branch expansion.

£300 for the Toc H World Chain of Light at Cuddesdon House, towards the subsistence costs of invited people on low incomes who would not otherwise be able to attend.

£1200 to the Toc H Conwy/Clwyd District for a CAMEO/Project **Nature Conservation and Irish Issues**, to be held at Port Penrhyn from 31 July to 8 August 1993.

£1500 towards the cost of **Euro-kids '93**, a week-long project in Belgium for members of the Cuffley and District Youth and Community Centre, Hertfordshire, from 23-30 July 1993, and their plans for an exchange visit by teenagers from Poperinge and District in 1994.

Awards totalling £6,645 have been made in 1992/93 and several of these have been featured in *Point three*.

Applications are welcomed for imaginative CHALLENGING projects. Forms are obtainable from: Toc H, 1 Forest Close, Wendover, Aylesbury, Bucks HP22 6BT

Your Letters

The Editor, *Point 3*,
Toc H Headquarters,
1 Fenner Close,
Wendover, Aylesbury,
Bucks, HP22 6BT

Long Term Strategic Plan/ Community Living

I read with interest the letters from J R Morgan and David Brougham in February's *Point three*.

First of all I agree with John Morgan in his views on the Long Term Strategic Plan, particularly whether it is necessary to create jobs with fancy names and commit such a large sum of money to the plan. It even plans to have a 'figurehead' of a Director!

It was a strange coincidence that on the same page as John Morgan's letter was the one from David Brougham deploring the decision of Central Council to discontinue Community Houses, drawing vividly on his own experiences.

I would have thought that Community Houses were or could be closely connected with friendship circles, one of the four main Methods set out in Proposals for the Future. Indeed, does Focus for the Future affirm that Toc H was going to 'provide opportunities for people to meet who would not otherwise do so' and 'to develop friendship'? Are Community Houses to be discontinued for financial reasons? If not, for what reason?

I agree that Toc H needs 'gingering up' if it is to carry on, but I feel that the number one priority is to give immediate assistance to branches to get new members. My own branch has been doing its best in this direction, but with little specific help or encouragement from above.

V J Beauchamp
Seaford, East Sussex

An Effective Badge

At the last meeting of Wyre Forest Branch we discussed the Main Resolution and the problems of outreach. The suggestion was made that we should always wear our badges. The thing that troubled our members is that the present badge is so insignificant. Not only is it very small but the design is confused and indefinite. We all much preferred the old 'Lamp' design. We realise the significance of Toc H for the world but we do not feel that the badge expresses this clearly. The simple symbol of the Lamp was much more positive.

We wonder how many *Point three* readers agree with us. We hope that if enough people do agree, the Executive might be persuaded to think again about the badge, as it is so important to our image.

William Elliot
Secretary, Wyre Forest Branch

Thinking Positively

Can I refer J R Morgan (Ruislip) to December '92 *Point three* and the report of Central Council therein.

Immediately we see photographs. A former Hon Treasurer, a staff team leader with over 10 years' service, a central councillor (yours truly!), a regional chairer, another councillor, and a trustee/former director. All of these spoke against the passing of the Long Term Strategic Plan.

How can you justifiably ask if you are alone in the view you express in your letter? Is this Movement one which should go forward in reluctance? Other plans referred to for the rebirth of Toc H will certainly have become 'stillborn' if they were voted in with reluctance.

Whatever we do, let's do it positively and for positive reasons, not because it is the best of a bad job.

Neal Terry
Tyne & Wear

Reflections of a New Member

I have just attended my first Regional Council meeting. We listened intently to the chairman and the speakers and took part in group discussions to make us more aware of how to attract new members and get projects started. Afterwards, talking and thinking, I feel certain that because of its initial founding on Christian principles, Toc H has a specially important role to play in the world today and that we must work hard to keep it alive. Many people I have spoken to seem to be unaware of what Toc H does, or else to have an image of it as an



Spring in the Editor's garden

old-fashioned organisation connected in some way with the First World War. We are probably a bit top heavy with older members but their expertise and wisdom are invaluable and the enthusiasm of the dedicated younger people I have met is infectious. I am sure that the Ceremony of Light and homegoing prayers are important parts of our meetings, so let us keep the lamps well filled with oil and the wicks well trimmed and let people see what we do in Toc H as a witness to our Christian ideals. I have a Toc H sticker in my car and went home armed with leaflets for my friends and I will see that they are distributed.

Margaret Davies
Solihull

Welcome to 12 New Members

*The following new members were
registered during February/March*

Arthur Brown (Barrow-on-Humber J)
Dennis G Southcott, Mr L J Southcott
(Calstock M)
Mrs Sylvia R Wirth (E C & Tower Hill J)
Thomas Hill Long
(North Bucks with Oxford District)
Mrs J M A Hemsley (Penn W)
Gaston Deprez (Poperinge J)
Revd Clive Southerton (Prestatyn & District J)
Mrs Mary A Robinson, Trevor Robinson
(Rhyl North J)
Mrs Kathleen Reynolds (Sandown/Shanklin J)
Miss Caroline Smith (Tunbridge Wells East J)



Deaths

**We regret to announce the death of the
following members:**

In November - Edgar Bowering (Peterborough &
Stamford District)

In December - Arthur Pilkington (Horwich)

In January - Violet M Gabriel (Shirehampton)
James Stevens (Nottingham)
Violet Sturmev (Wroughton)

In February - Mary F Cooper (Brighton)
Jonathan D Davies (Burraton)
H White Cozens (Southdown District)
Joseph H Knight (Central Branch)

Albert H 'Tiny' Little (Western
approaches & Chiltern District)
Dorothy M Prosser (Cardiff)
Marie P M Steele (Melton Mowbray)
Norman L Tayler (Broadway)
Betty K M White (Gorleston)
Laura R Wickenden (Somerton)

Not previously recorded -

Philip H Carter (South East Regional
Branch)
Gertrude 'Trudy' Hipperson (Seaford)
Mabel I Hughes (Bournemouth
& Christchurch)

SPECIAL TRIBUTES

Laura Wickenden, affectionately known to all as 'Wick', passed away in February. She was a loyal and dedicated member of Somerton Branch and especially excelled in catering for their functions. She was always willing to give generous help to branch projects and other activities.

ERJ

Marie Steele of Melton Mowbray Women's Branch passed away on 13 February. She was a much loved and active member and was co-founder of the Melton Mowbray Friendship Circle. Over the years she crewed for the Peter Lee Marchant Trust, which provides boat trips for disabled people. She also helped at Home Start for mothers with children under five. She will be missed.

JDB

Betty White, who died on 5 February, will be greatly missed, not only in the local district but throughout the East Anglian area. She joined Gorleston Branch some 40 years ago and entered into all the activities with genuine and intense interest. She was a founder member of the Singing Group which does valuable community work. As branch and district Pilot, she took to heart preservation of the spiritual life of the Movement, organising all services throughout the year, with special attention to the World Chain of Light. Her passing brings to a close years of loyalty and dedication to Toc H. Many members and friends joined to pay their respects and show gratitude for her life at the service held at St Andrew's Church, Gorleston.

CAB

Broadway Branch has suffered a grievous loss in the death of Norman Tayler. He had been a member of Toc H for about 40 years and devoted his life to helping anyone who asked for or needed assistance or advice. As Pilot he succeeded in keeping the branch on a straight course, and for the past 14 years was Treasurer. Norman's life embodied everything that Toc H stands for. He will be sadly missed but remembered with affection and pride by us all. We thank God for the privilege of knowing him and sharing in his friendship and service.

JJ

The Revd David Davies, padre of Burraton (Men's) Branch, died on 3 February. He served in the Royal Navy for 22 years, which included, during the War, three years with the North Sea convoys and in Russia. As his naval career drew to an end, he found his vocation and in 1961 was ordained as a Methodist minister. It was after he and his wife had retired to Burraton that he joined Toc H, becoming branch padre. He was compassionate, humble in word and service and had a Welshman's love for music and singing. The branch remember David for his quiet influence and thoughtful and helpful talks on Padre's Night. We thank God for his ministry and service.

NN

Shirehampton Women's Branch sorrowfully report the death on 19 January of Marjorie Violet Gabriel. A loyal member of Toc H since 1948, she had worked very hard for the branch, willingly taking part in all its corporate activities, whether visiting old people or participating in regular jobs at the Bristol Royal Infirmary, Dr Barnardo's and the National Children's Home in Bristol. Ill health prevented her from attending meetings for the past three years, but branch members kept in touch with and visited her and many were able to attend her funeral service, during which Light was taken by the branch chairman.

LS

Hubert White Cozens, one of the dwindling band of World War I veterans, died on 1 February at the age of 95. He first came upon Toc H in the war and, on moving to Leatherhead in the 1920s, joined the branch there. After moving to Harrow Weald, he was instrumental, together with his wife Enid, in forming Toc H Wealdstone and later also the Women's Branch. On retirement - 35 years ago - both he and Enid continued to serve the Movement in Aldwick and Bognor Regis as well as the District. He worked for many years for the blind and the disabled as well. Apart from his interest in the local cricket club and the church, his spare time was dedicated to Toc H work. (The 70th anniversary of his marriage to Enid was recorded in Point three last year.) We thank God for his life.

RER/EJF

ALISON HOUSE SILVER JUBILEE

Are you a keen, energetic and knowledgeable gardener? If you've got 'green fingers', then here's an invitation that you just can't refuse!

Toc H members and friends who love gardening are invited to bring their trowels, secateurs, spades, clippers, etc., to Alison House, Cromford, from Monday to Friday, 24-28 May 1993, and to transform the grounds of this much loved House into a blaze of colour and delight for the many visitors coming to celebrate this, its Silver Jubilee Year.

There is a lot to be done including bedding out, cutting lawns, building a rockery, tidying the shrubbery, preparing the ground for setting, pruning - the list is endless.

This week is to be the first of a series taking 'Alison House Through the Seasons' and bringing beauty to the gardens.

Places are limited, so don't delay, reserve yours now by contacting:

John Biggerstaff, Toc H, 1 Forest Close, Wendover, Bucks.

TOC H NORTH EAST REGION RESTIVAL

Saturday 3 July 1993

Bridlington

Why not come and join us to celebrate all that is good in Toc H. We have a programme of events planned around the theme 'Toc H United' including a rededication service, a festive afternoon, a pleasure boat trip and a barn dance.

Guest Speaker -
John Biggerstaff

For further information, or tickets for the event please contact:

Richard Newby	OR	Anne Puddicombe
46 Queensgate		9 Healey Wood Crescent
Bridlington		Brighthouse
North Humberside		West Yorkshire
YO16 5LN		HD6 3RP

TALBOT HOUSE - WARDENS 1993

There was a very enthusiastic response by members to the request for voluntary Wardens for Talbot House, Poperinge, resulting in continuous cover until November 1993. The Talbot House Association expresses its sincere thanks to everyone who has volunteered.

As a consequence it has been decided to open the list for 1994 Wardens, and volunteers have already offered themselves for the months of April, June and September.

If you are interested in volunteering to be a Warden during 1994 or would like more information, please contact:

John Biggerstaff, Toc H, 1 Forest Close, Wendover, Bucks.

VOLUNTEER WARDEN SCHEME FOR COLSTERDALE

Anyone interested in wardening at the Toc H Centre, Colsterdale, from a weekend to a month or longer, please contact:

John Dunwell, 31 Otterbeck Way, Aiskew, Bedale, North Yorkshire DL8 1XL. Tel: 0677 425152

*From June onwards
there will be a Vacancy in
the Community House
at Newark Street.*

For further details please contact:

Ellen Crimmins,
Toc H Centre,
38 Newark Street,
Whitechapel, London E1 2AA.
Tel: 071 247 5110

Small Ads

Small advertisements must be received (with remittance) five weeks before publication day, which is the 23rd of the preceding month. The charge is 10p a word (minimum £1) plus VAT, to *Point three* Magazine. Rates of display advertisements can be obtained from the Editorial Office, Toc H Headquarters, 1 Forest Close, Wendover, Aylesbury, Bucks HP22 6BT.

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Accommodation for 5 plus cot.
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